

Inspection of a good school: Loddington CofE (VA) Primary School

Main Street, Loddington, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN14 1LA

Inspection date: 28 February 2023

Outcome

Loddington CofE (VA) Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a real family feel in and around the school. Parents and carers are very positive about their children's experiences. As one parent typically stated: 'I love the school. It's like a family; very caring and understanding.' Leaders are keen to ensure that the school is at the heart of the local community. Pupils enjoy hearing the memories of their 'pen pals', who are residents in a local care home for the elderly.

Leaders are aspirational for all pupils to achieve academically and personally. They are keen to broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities that help them explore beyond the curriculum. Parents appreciate how their children benefit from these extra opportunities.

The school is calm. Pupils behave well around school. They are happy and feel safe. One pupil reflected others' views by saying: 'The school is a really nice place. Everyone is really friendly.' Pupils know teachers deal with bullying should it happen. Pupils respect each other and their differences. They look after and support each other as they get older. Pupils in key stage 2 enjoy working with younger pupils as 'reading buddies'. Pupils sensitively correct others if they say something inappropriate.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Reading is a clear focus in this school. Leaders ensure that children learn to read as soon as they join the Reception Year. There is a consistent approach to teaching phonics. Skilled staff identify when pupils fall behind. Targeted support helps these pupils to catch up quickly. Books closely match pupils' needs. Pupils become confident and fluent readers. Beyond the teaching of phonics, reading remains a focus. Leaders have chosen a range of new reading books to develop pupils' interests. Pupils enjoy reading.

The curriculum is well structured, starting in the early years. There is a keen focus on pupils developing a broad and rich vocabulary. Subject leaders identify key vocabulary pupils need to know in each subject. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Pupils talk

confidently about their learning in many subjects, using subject-specific terms. For example, pupils use appropriate language to explain how to use algebra to solve equations. Leaders recently introduced systems to check what pupils remember. However, teachers do not always use these systems consistently to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. In a few subjects, subject leaders do not check carefully enough how well teachers implement the curriculum or if pupils can recall what they have learned.

Children settle quickly into the early years. Routines are well established. Well-designed activities enable children to work independently. Adults ask appropriate questions to help develop children's understanding. Adults model expectations effectively. Children are confident to share their thinking and learning with others.

Leaders make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the right support. They work closely with external organisations to identify these pupils' needs. Teachers adapt the curriculum appropriately, so that these pupils can be successful. As one parent of a child with SEND explained: 'The class teacher and teaching assistant fully understand what works best in supporting our child.' Other parents agree.

Pupils get on well with each other. Pupils understand the difference between unpleasant behaviour and bullying. Older pupils are keen to support and help their younger peers. Low-level disruptive behaviour is rare. Should it happen, adults quickly resolve it. Pupils say that the behaviour policy is applied consistently. Pupils know that adults will provide help if they need it. As one pupil typically explained: 'Staff go above and beyond to make sure that we are happy and doing well.'

Pupils enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. They take part in music and sport clubs, including, choir, netball and climbing and some learn to play instruments, such as the ukulele, guitar, recorder and flute. Pupils appreciate opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities. Representatives of the school ethos committee and the school council know their decisions make the school a better place. Pupils understand equality and diversity. However, a few pupils have a limited understanding of protected groups and different faiths.

Staff say leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. Staff get the time they need to undertake their leadership responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make safeguarding pupils a priority. Staff training ensures that they are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. They know the signs that a pupil may be at risk of potential harm. Staff are knowledgeable about how to report concerns. Systems for reporting and recording concerns are monitored regularly. Leaders make appropriate checks on adults who work at the school.

Pupils feel safe in school. Pupils know the actions they should take to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, subject leaders do not check closely enough that teachers are implementing the curriculum consistently well. Some pupils cannot always recall what they have learned in these subjects. Senior leaders should ensure that subject leaders check that the planned curriculum is being delivered as intended, so that pupils remember important knowledge.
- Teachers do not always check what pupils have learned carefully enough. Pupils sometimes have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that systems to check what pupils know are used consistently by teachers. Leaders should make sure that teachers use this information to inform their future curriculum plans.
- A few pupils have a limited understanding of protected groups and different faiths. They know it is important to respect difference and diversity. However, they do not always demonstrate this through recall of knowledge. Leaders should ensure that all pupils have the necessary knowledge and understanding of British values, gender equality and different faiths.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2017.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	141461
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10241694
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	95
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Margaret Holman
Headteacher	Helen Dowsett
Website	www.loddingtonschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a part of the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in three subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and met with teachers and pupils. They also looked at curriculum documentation for physical education.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the local governing board and the trust compliance officer.

- The lead inspector met with the trust's chief executive officer, the academy improvement officer and the director of education for the diocese.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, and Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys. Inspectors spoke informally to parents outside the school.
- Records of attendance, behaviour and safeguarding were scrutinised. This included the school's single central record. Inspectors also conducted meetings with leaders to discuss the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors considered pupils' behaviour at various times of day, including in lessons, around the school site and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Mark Anderson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Katie Towers

Ofsted Inspector

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